

Message Text

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R 270050Z JUN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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FOLLOWING REPEAT KHARTOUM 1498 ACTION SECSTATE INFO

BRUSSELS 24 JUNE 1974. QUOTE:

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KHARTOUM 1498

DEPT PASS VOA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SU

SUBJ: PRESS HANDLING VERDICT IN BSO CASE

REF: KHARTOUM 1495

1. IN ORDER AVOID ANY POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT TO GOS OR
ADVERSE IMPACT ON PRESIDENT NIMEIRI (WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE
CONFIRMING OR MODIFYING SENTENCES AFTER BRIEF UNPUBLICIZED REVIEW
BY HIGH COURT) RECOMMEND DEPT COMMENTS TO PRESS RE BSO VERDICT
BE FACTUAL AND LOW KEY. SOMETHING ALONG LINES PARA 2 BELOW WOULD
MEET CASE HERE.

2. QUOTE. AS RESULT FULL AND DETAILED EXAMINATION BSO CASE
BY SUDANESE MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY AND SUPERIOR COURT, EIGHT BSO
DEFENDANTS WERE ON JUNE 24 CONVICTED OF MURDER OF OUR THEN
AMBASSADOR AND HIS DEPUTY IN KHARTOUM IN MARCH 1973. CASE
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WAS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT PURSUANT TO APPLICABLE SUDANESE

JUDICIAL PROCESSES. THE LIFE SENTENCES IMPOSED ARE IN ACCORD WITH SUDANESE PENAL CODE IN SUCH CASES. THROUGHOUT THIS CASE DEPT HAS REMAINED CONFIDENT THAT JUSTICE WOULD BE DONE. SINCE THIS MATTER FALLS WITHIN PURVIEW JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF ANOTHER COUNTRY, FURTHER COMMENT ON OUR PART WOULD BE CLEARLY INAPPROPRIATE. END QUOTE.

3. SHOULD JOURNALISTS PRESS QUESTION AS TO WHY CAPITAL PUNISHMENT NOT IMPOSED, SPOKESMAN MIGHT RECALL OUR OWN LEGAL POSITION RE DEATH PENALTY (E.G. SIRHAN SIRHAN) AND NOTE THAT ARTICLE 251 SUDANESE PENAL CODE SPECIFICALLY PRESCRIBES "DEATH OR LIFE IMPRISONMENT" FOR THOSE CONVICTED OF MURDER.

4. VOA SHOULD OF COURSE FOLLOW DEPT GUIDANCE AND IN PARTICULAR NOT REPEAT NOT GIVE UNDUE PROMINENCE TO OUTCOME.

5. SINCE WE UNDERSTAND SECRETARY MAY BE HOLDING PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 24, SUGGEST HE BE APPROPRIATELY BRIEFED IN EVENT A QUESTION IS ASKED.

6. ADDITIONALLY, DEPT WILL NO DOUBT WISH ASSURE MRS. NOEL AND MRS. MOORE IMMEDIATELY INFORMED OUTCOME, ALTHOUGH WE ASSUME THEY WILL NOT, REPEAT NOT, WISH TO RESPOND TO ANY PRESS QUERIES.

BREWER

UNQUOTE SISCO

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